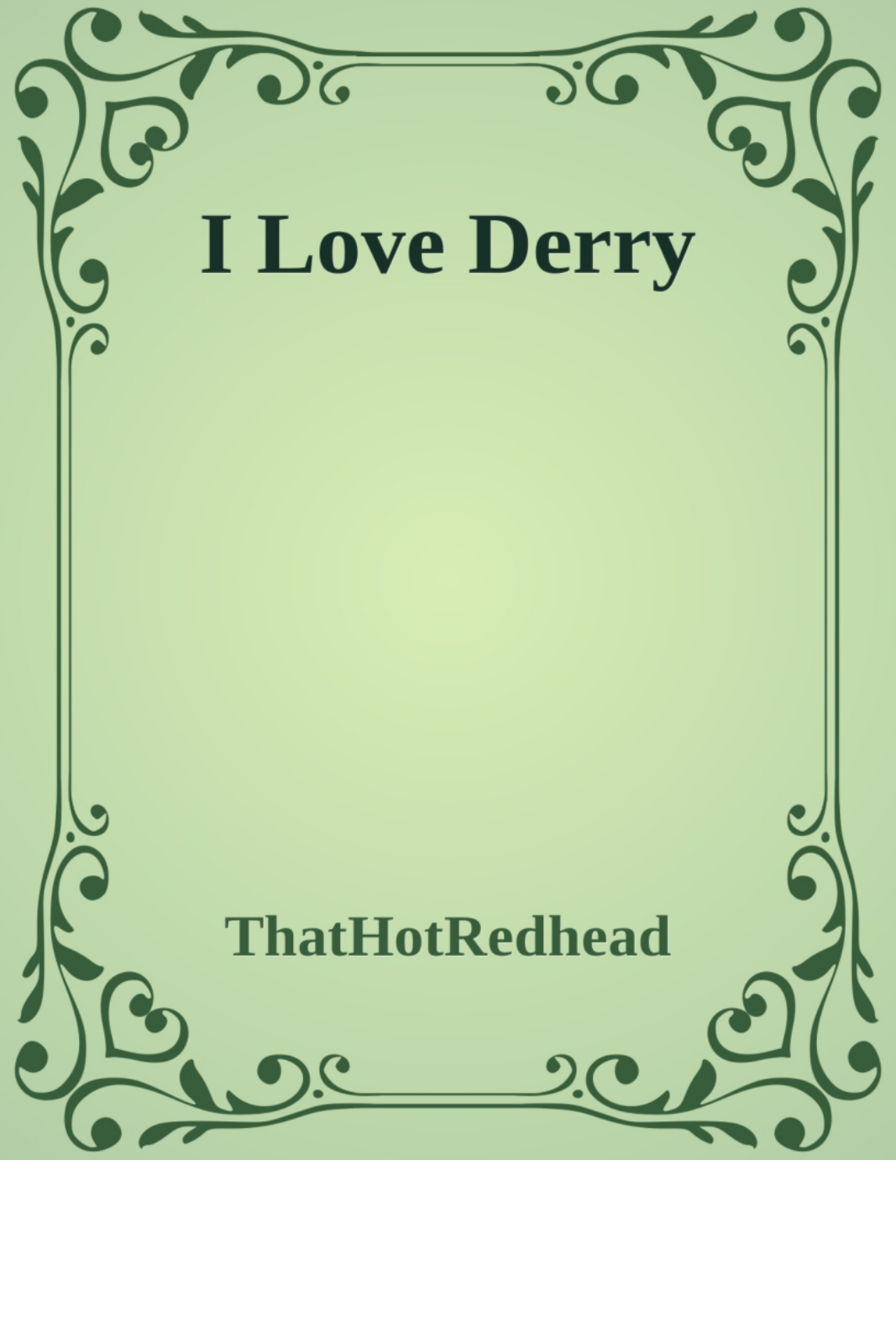




I Love Derry

ThatHotRedhead

I Love Derry by ThatHotRedhead

Category: IT (2017), IT - Stephen King

Genre: Blood and Gore, Clowns, Death, Eating, Gen, Hungry clown, Minor Character Death, Pennywise (IT) - Freeform, Pennywise being himself, Pennywise the Shapeshifter, Psychological Horror, Psychological Torture, Violence

Language: English

Characters: Original Characters, Pennywise (IT)

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2017-10-27

Updated: 2017-11-13

Packaged: 2020-02-01 17:03:47

Rating: Mature

Warnings: Graphic Depictions Of Violence

Chapters: 5

Words: 17,321

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

A gruesome exploration of IT, The creature from the titular novel by Steven King.

Telling a story that could happen anytime, when Pennywise the Dancing Clown awakens from his long rest to murder and consume humans, namely children.

Essentially IT hunting down, torturing and consuming people because I want to write something horrible and Pennywise is a haunting character.

Probably has more to come. Love this terrifying character and all the possibilities.

I will consider suggestions for characters to pit against the Dancing Clown!

1. Chapter 1

Author's Note:

If you don't like reading about things dieing in gruesome ways, consider yourself warned.

If you like this, and want to see more, or have an idea for a character you would like to see pitted against Pennywise, I want to hear it! If I like what you got, I might add in your idea!

Tried to keep our favorite terrifying cosmic demon in character as best I could. However, I have only seen the movie once, and am about to start reading the book, so apologies for inconsistencies.

Feedings tend to blur together for an eternal being.

Humans are so predictable in their simplistic fears. It knows when It has a good thing going though.

The persona of Pennywise the Dancing Clown, this form... with its soft pale silken cloth, ruffled neck, wrists, and ankles... Puffy shoulders and hips.... The soft bright red pom pom buttons... The pristine delicate white gloves that fit snugly on It's slender strong hands... The light, almost gravity defying ginger red hair... The stark white makeup punctuated by sharp, crisp, dark, full, red lips... A sharp red line curving up his face on either side, stemming from each corner of his mouth travelling up over his eyes to end in a point above his brow. The tip of his sharp nose even has a splash of the same red across the end.

This image seems most universally effective in instilling fear in the humans, namely the young children whom It so enjoys consuming. As the decades passed, It grew rather fond of this image, choosing to maintain it instead of It's true cosmic form.

This place, he has come to understand the humans call it Derry, has been deeply fruitful for the many hundreds of years It has resided

deep within the underground realms of the sewers.

It awakens to a ripple in the fabric of reality. A small disturbance, just enough to tickle It's awareness. It's amorphous glowing orange form coalesces and tightens into It's familiar analog of Pennywise the Dancing Clown, It's boots gently touching down in the shallow puddle of stagnant water on the floor of the sewer with a soft wet sound.

Pennywise opens his eyes and draws a breath of stale air into himself through his nose. His skin tingles pleasantly when a drop of cold water lands on his head and rolls down the back of his neck. Sensations have returned in his wakefulness, and his lips curve in a pleased manner when his belly tightens in a pang of hunger.

Pennywise the Dancing Clown is hungry. Hungry for Fear. Hungry for flesh.

Looking up the many stories tall tower of junk he has amassed, teetering unusually, defiant of this plane's laws of physics, Pennywise can see the first trickles of sunlight filtering through the gloom, backlighting the bodies of past victims as they float gently in the stagnant air.

With an effortless thought, Pennywise is above ground, his boots crunching in the layer of grime and crumbling plaster that coats the floor of The House. His calm blue eyes lazily scan around as he strides away from The Well's opening, and through The House.

Pennywise can smell the spring air as it seeps into the dark dank House and he gets a small smile. It is the season for children, in Derry. He can already hear them playing in the streets and in the park in the distance, their cheerful laughter and playful screams making his stomach tighten hungrily, and his mouth fill with saliva.

He steps out of the front door of The House and takes in his realm. Two blocks away, a husband and wife jog towards The House with their dog. Looking down the other direction, a car drives slowly away, around a group of children on bicycles. Pennywise finds his lips pulling away from his teeth in a hungry grin. The humans were busy in his absence, creating more delectable meals, ripe for the

picking.

His insides quicken, the hunger again making itself known. A growl rises from his throat just as the jogging couple pass before The House. The dog instantly stops dead in its tracks and faces The House, making the man and woman stumble as they are jerked to a stop. The dog raises its hackles and lowers its head, nervous. It knows Pennywise is there, but cannot understand what Pennywise is. Pennywise smiles broadly as he takes a few slow steps towards the dog as the humans try to drag it away, eager to return to their run. But the dog refuses to budge, staring right into Pennywise's blue eyes as it begins to growl.

Pennywise can feel the uneasiness begin to seep from the man and woman, their eyes anxiously darting between the dog and The House as they continue to try and coax their pet to move. All the while, Pennywise walks closer, eyes locked with the dog, smile wide on his face. The dog starts to lunge and bark, snarling at him as he draws within feet of the animal. He squats down eye to eye and the dog stills, baring its teeth, pinning its ears back, and snarling. Pennywise feels his own eyes shift as their true, glowing amber color surfaces.

The Deadlights glow within their depths as It gazes down at the dog. The dog barks as Pennywise allows his face to split open into the vast toothy maw reminiscent of his true form, the Deadlights shining from deep within his core. The dog goes still and Pennywise reaches out and takes it by the throat and stands, lifting the now placid animal effortlessly. The man and woman scream as their dog seemingly lifts up and floats in midair. They drop the leash and stumble backwards onto the sidewalk as the dog goes limp with a short cry. The woman screams, clutching at her husband's torso as they both scoot back into the gravelly street.

Pennywise begins to reveal himself, first allowing them to see his gloved hand, his slender powerful digits firmly sunk into their dog's neck. Then, slowly, he reveals more of himself, down his arm, across his shoulder and chest. He allows his face to be revealed as the rest of his body materializes and the woman gasps in horror, the man clutching protectively at her. Slowly, Pennywise raises his other arm straight out towards them, his index finger pointed at them. Tilting his head to the side with a brow raised and a smirk, he lifts the dog

over his head and opens his mouth even wider and drops the dog in, clamping down and chewing the hairy beast as the sound of squelching guts and crushing bones fills the spring air. The woman again lets out a horrified scream and the man makes unintelligible sounds as Pennywise swallows the dog whole, then closes his mouth, his face returning to normal. Slowly he tilts his head back down to look at the man and woman with his signature smile, blood covering his face and dripping onto his neck frill.

Then, in the blink of an eye, Pennywise appears crouching right in front of the weeping terrified couple with a single red balloon, the white string delicately pinched between his left thumb and forefinger, all his other fingers fanned gracefully out to the side.

Pennywise lets out a rude belch, and makes an exaggeratedly embarrassed expression, covering his mouth with the ends of the fingers of his right hand as his wide blue eyes peer over at the two traumatized adults. The woman gags at the stench of rotting flesh and death coming off it, her hands slapping over her mouth.

“Oh my, pardon me! That’s bad manners of Pennywise! Hehehe!” His voice modulates effortlessly into that playful register as he offers the balloon to the woman, turning it to reveal the ‘I Love Derry’ message printed neatly in white. His innocent giggle quickly degrades into a terrifying cackle as his face contorts into a terrible grimacing visage, mouth filled with needle-sharp teeth.

Pennywise is filled with hungry excitement; cortisol and adrenaline pour off the couple in waves, and he is growing more excited by it, reveling in the sight and smell of fear. It is not every day Pennywise the Dancing Clown gets this much of a rise out of an adult, let alone a *pair* of them.

Pennywise stops laughing suddenly, his face snapping to a neutral stare as his bottom lip droops just a bit, saliva beginning to run down and drip off. His haunting yellow eyes dart from the man to the woman a few times before he freezes on the woman, leaning closer to her. The balloon pops loudly and she jumps in fear as blood sprays all over all three of them. Pennywise smiles broadly, his teeth long and sharp. “SO! Who’s *next*?” Pennywise growls followed by a cackle as the woman whimpers, jumping in fear when he shouted.

“Fuck off you freak! I’m not scared of you! Leave my wife alone!” The man shouts, putting himself between Pennywise and the woman, a defiant look on his fearful, blood splattered face. He started try and help her stand.

Pennywise jerks his head sharply to look directly into the man's wide eyes, expression somewhat offended, “Oh, I’m sorry... is this not *real* enough for you?” Pennywise’s voice is harsh, low, goading. His face broadens as his mouth expands, more of his teeth pressing out sharply from his gums as his right hand shoots out and wraps around the woman's neck, ripping a scream from her throat as Pennywise stands, easily lifting her off the ground so her feet dangle an inch above the pavement. “Let’s see if we can’t rectify that!” Oh how Pennywise loves being so tall, the puny humans are so easy to play with.

The woman clutches at his wrist, desperately clawing at his fingers in an attempt to loosen his cold steel grip. “Mayghulh!” she chokes out what sounds like his name, struggling to breathe as his hands crush her trachea.

“HA HA HA HA! MIIICHAAAEELL! MICHAEL!” Pennywise squeals, mocking the woman as the man scrambles to his feet and lunges at Pennywise, his balled fist swinging at his face. Pennywise dodges the fist, laughing and yelling his name sharply one more time, voice taunting and high pitched as Michael snarls and faces the clown again.

“Put her down!” Michael bellows, balling his fists and tensing, preparing to throw another punch.

Pennywise smirks, his sharp golden eyes pointing off in odd directions as his free hand wraps around one of the woman's legs and effortlessly rips it off. He waggles the bleeding limb with a deviant smirk as the woman lets out a blood curdling scream. Michael doubles over and vomits bile in utter shock. “SO *very* demanding. It's been some time since I toyed with a mature human. I had nearly forgotten how hard you are to please.” Pennywise says with an exaggerated frown, letting the hand holding the woman's leg drop to his side.

The woman makes a weak choking sound and Pennywise slowly turns his head to look at her. His lips push together in a thoughtful, gently puckered manner as he watches the blood pour from her severed hip. He tilts his head thoughtfully, licking his lips. He drops the leg in his other hand, grabs the woman by the waist and lifts her hip to his open, waiting mouth. The blood pours into his waiting maw, dribbling down his chin and across his cheek momentarily before he opens it wide enough to clamp his mouth around the stump with a growl. His eyes roll back and he slides his eyelids shut as hot fresh blood pours into his empty belly, full of cortisol and adrenaline... fear... terror.

He swallows mouthfuls, growling in pleasure. In the background he hears a male screaming incoherently. He breathes deep, ignoring that for now as the sweet taste of fresh blood washes his long deprived senses in a pleasant tingle.

A sharp and sudden blow to the left side of his ribcage startles him out of his daze and he drops the nearly dead woman, stumbling to the side with a grunt of surprise. Righting himself with blinking eyes, Pennywise looks up to see the man... Michael, was it? Yes, to see Michael holding a long steel pipe in his hands. Pennywise cocks his head harshly to the side. His ribs actually hurt a little. "I see. An attention seeker. Goody goody! Let us see what you got, Mikey-boy! Old Pennywise is itching for a good challenge..." Pennywise spreads his feet a little, lowering his head menacingly, a deep chuckle rising in his throat as he bares his teeth.

A soft whimper sounds beside him and his eyes go wide, head snapping down to the woman. "I'll be with you in a moment, sweet one, Michael has to be a hero. Don'tcha, boy!" Pennywise jeers, enraging Michael into charging at him with a yell, pipe poised over his shoulder ready for a mighty strike. Pennywise chuckles as Michael leaps at him, swinging the pipe hard at his shoulder.

Pennywise easily catches the pipe mid-swing and rips it from Michael's hands, spinning it around and bringing it crashing down on the intersection of his neck and left shoulder. Michael cries out in agony and a loud crack is heard before he is slammed to the ground by the force of Pennywise's brutal blow. The clown cackles playfully as he steps closer to Michael and crouches down to look at him,

tapping the end of the pipe on his head as the man moans, clutching his shattered shoulder with his other hand. "Ooh, what a slugger! Damn, why, I'd say that's a home run, what do you think, Laney?" Pennywise asks as he looks back over his shoulder at the bleeding woman. "Hmmm... seems Laaane..." Pennywise looks back down at Michael with a cruel smile, "may no longer be with us." He fakes a pout before smiling again, cruelly this time.

Michael has tears of pain and anguish streaming from his eyes as he glares up at the growling Pennywise. "I'm still not scared of you, you evil monster..." he grates, his face twisted with pain.

Pennywise expression softens and he leans close to Michael's face. "Well then, let us remedy that... shall we? *Michael?*" Pennywise laughs with a garish smile as his body twists and reforms into something terrible. Huge hairy insectoid legs; eight, to be precise, erupt from his back as his body arches and expands aggressively, the clown garb tearing and ripping as an enormous eight eyed spider emerges from the skin of Pennywise. The hulking arachnid looks like a giant tropical tarantula with deep jet black hair all over, and bright blood red blazes paint the first joint of each leg. The head erupts from the carapace with chelicera the size of Michael's legs and fangs like elephant tusks. The eight orb-like eyes gleam a glowing orange as the Deadlights illuminate the beastly tarantula from within.

The dark, thick, hairy body looms over Michael and Pennywise opens his massive chelicerae to expose the tarantulas salivating mouth, massive fangs dripping venom and pedipalps reaching towards him. Michael screams as genuine terror grips him; he is staring down a giant Mexican flame knee tarantula. Adrenaline floods his body and he drags himself to his feet, ignoring the agony from his shattered left shoulder as he starts running towards The House, leaping clear over the four steps and directly onto the porch. The tarantula runs quickly up behind him, it's heavy body making the house tremble, as Michael rips the door open and slams it behind him.

The House shudders and plaster rains around him as the tarantula collides with the front of the house, one of its legs smashing through a boarded up window and flailing about.

Michael cries out, backing away from the door as his eyes dart all

over, looking for a way to go. He starts down the hall opposite of the front door and sprints towards the door he sees at the end as he hears the spider wrench its massive black leg from the window and let out a strange hissing chittering sound, a sound he knows is made by its chelicerae rubbing aggressively together, a sign of severe agitation. A sound he knows all too well from his time spent caring for the aggressive tarantulas at the lab he works at. He never liked spiders, but tarantulas were extra horrifying for him because of their sheer size and aggression. The awful hissing sound their chelicerae make unsettles him deeply and reminds him of the time a mexican flame knee tarantula gnawed its massive fangs into his hand for two agonizing minutes before another entomologist managed to pull her fangs out. His left index finger has never been the same.

As Michael bursts through the door at the end of the hall, he turns and slams it shut, pressing his back to it and panting as his eyes dart all over the dingy poorly lit room. There is a door with a window beside it. He can see a stand of trees on the far side of the overgrown back yard. Maybe he can make a break for it and escape through those trees. With one last look around, Michael walks quickly and as quietly as possible to the window, peering anxiously out in search of his assailant. He doesn't see anything, which unsettles him deeply, but he swallows hard and reaches for the doorknob. Slowly he turns it and cracks the door open, praying that it will not make a sound. It opens an inch before it lets out a low groan and he freezes, heart thundering in his chest as he peers timidly out through the crack. Nothing there.

He hears sounds inside The House, seemingly from above him. Dust showers from the ceiling as heavy footsteps sound across the old floorboards. Michael is shaking, and his shoulder is on fire. He has to get out of here.

He hears a door open upstairs and adrenaline dumps into his veins. He throws the door open and sprints for the trees at the back of the yard, aiming for a gap between two of them. He sprints across the yard, left shoulder screaming in agony. But he pushes through the sickening pain, determined to get out.

As he approaches the gap in the trees, his stomach drops. There is a six foot chain link fence behind the trees that he slams into and grabs

with his right hand, giving it a furious shake as he snarls, turning to face The House, back pressed to the cold fence. He gasps when he sees the clown standing just outside the door he just left, a handful of red balloons floating in front of his face.

Michael wipes sweat from his face, and when he opens his eyes, the clown is inches from his face, a snarl on his lips. Michael screams, but the sound is halted as Pennywise wraps his hands around his throat and splits his mouth wide open. Slowly he draws Michael's face into his mouth, the Deadlights rendering the man instantly still and pliant as Pennywise wraps his mouth around his head and bites down. Like an alien snake, he swallows Michael whole, filling his belly with some of the tastiest flesh he has had in years.

True fear is hard to cultivate. Especially in adults. Pennywise growls happily as the weight of his first meal sinks into his belly and he straightens, closing his mouth and turning to walk back to the front yard where Lane waits for him.

Pennywise crouches over her cooling body and consumes bite after bite of prime, fear seasoned meat. His eyes glaze over as he enjoys his meal, devouring every scrap, including her severed leg. Once he is finished, Pennywise straightens and his body shivers with momentary satisfaction.

He smiles, pleased with himself. "Let the feasting begin." Pennywise says softly to himself as he strides down the walkway onto the street, away from The House and towards the rest of the town.

End of Chapter One

2. Chapter two

Summary for the Chapter:

A little girl lets him in, spelling disaster for them all.
Also a little bit of injured! Pennywise. Still just
Pennywise being himself, the hungry greedy bastard.

Six year old Cadence Adams sits happily in her front yard, playing with her two favorite dolls. Her curly brunette hair mostly tamed into a set of pigtails that hang to her shoulders.

Richard and Christine Adams are sitting in the living room, enjoying some hot coffee as they halfway watch their daughter through the large picture window. Their attention is mainly on their phones as they scroll through the Saturday morning news and check emails.

Cadence leaps to her feet with a playful squeal after one of her dolls called the other a meanie for pulling her hair. Cadence laughs as she runs across the yard, dropping the dolls to clamber up the wooden jungle gym her father built for her. Her left sneaker catches awkwardly on one of the chunky fake stone hand holds on the climbing wall and she gasps as she slips, scraping her shin before correcting her grip and climbing to the top.

Plopping onto her rear she pulls up her legging to look at the angry scrape on her shin with a huff. "I sure hope mommy isn't gonna put me in time out for this. Ooh, and these were my favorites too." Cadence pouts with another huff as she rolls her legging back down, getting to her feet to run for the slide. She hesitates just outside the opening to the dark blue plastic tube, her little hands clutching the hand bar above the entrance. Her scraped leg stings for a moment, bringing wetness to her eyes. With a soft sound of anticipation, Cadence squeezes her eyes shut and flings herself feet first into the tube, laughing as the static tickles her skin and makes her hair stand on end.

Cadence erupts from the tube with a giggle as she clambers out and breaks at a run for the climbing wall again. The scrape on her leg now forgotten as her hands wrap around the bright colored hand

holds and pull her up the short wall.

When she erupts from the tube this time, she is grinning broadly, but she freezes, stumbling a bit from her momentum, when she sees a single red balloon floating a few feet away from her. Cadence stares at the balloon in moment of confusion, sure that it was not there moments ago. Curiously, but cautiously, Cadence walks up to the balloon, reaching out timidly to touch the bright shiny red orb. Her finger bumps the balloon and it sways away from her, making her smile as the sun lights it from behind, casting a red glow across her face.

“Hehe!”

Cadence wheels around at the soft sound of laughter from behind her. Her eyes dart around but she sees nothing. Confused, she turns back to the balloon and startles again when she sees a big hand in a crisp white glove with a silvery silk ruffle at the wrist, delicately holding the balloon’s white string between thumb and forefinger with all the other fingers spread out to the side.

She takes a step back, eyes suspiciously on the hand when suddenly, like a shimmering mirage, a very tall clown materializes into existence. Cadence cannot help but gasp as she takes another step back, her blue eyes wide and full of wonder as the tall lanky clown pulls the balloon away from his face to reveal his own smile and bright, almost unusually blue eyes. His face is painted a smooth crisp white and he has bright red nose and lips. A pair of red lines extend out from the corners of his mouth to the sides and then up to his eyes where they pass above his brow to end in sharp points near the top of his forehead.

“Oh! Well, good morning, Cadence!” The very tall clown says in an upbeat and energetic tone as he bends his long legs to squat eye-level with the child. Cadence lets her curious eyes wander across the grey-blue silk outfit he’s wearing, with its puffs and frills and three bright poofy red pom pom buttons that run down his midline.

Pennywise watches with a soft expression as Cadence, with unabashed childlike fascination, steps boldly up to him and reaches out to his arm, running her fingers over the smooth silk and soft

ruffle at his wrist before walking around behind him to touch his carrot orange hair. Stepping to his other side, she grabs the fabric at his hip, giving it a curious shake and watching the sun shine off the silk. At last she stands before the clown, all smiles as he sits down, crossing those long legs 'Indian style'.

Cadence giggles, "You're a nice clown, mister! I like your clothes, they're my favorite color!" The child takes a seat in front of him, smiling up at those blue eyes.

"Why, thank you Cadence! How very polite! Your mommy and daddy must be so proud of you." Pennywise smiles, letting out a little chuckle. Then, a scent wafts to his nose on the gentle breeze and his eyes start to glaze over, mouth filling with saliva before he catches himself with a sharp blink. Looking down at the child, his eyes fall on the rip in her leggings and he frowns sympathetically, gesturing with a graceful wave of his hand at her scrape, "Oh no, what happened to your shin?"

Cadence eyes go wide and she tries to cover the scrape with her hands, "Ooooh, mommy's gonna be mad at me cuz I ripped my leggings." Cadence frowns, visibly drooping.

"Now now, not if it was an accident." Pennywise offers with a raised brow.

Cadence hangs her head, "I slipped."

"See, nothing to fear!" he leans in closer, putting a gloved hand on one of her smaller ones, "Does it hurt?" Pennywise tilts his head, his blue eyes big.

Cadence looks up and nods shyly. "A little."

"Say, would a balloon make you feel better?" He says, reaching over to the single balloon in his hand and pulling away another, as if by magic. He widens his eyes with a broad smile.

Cadence gasps and reaches for the balloon as he hands it to her. "Wow! Thank you!" She grips the string tightly and looks up into the shining red orb. "Ooh, I don't want it to float away... can you tie it

on my wrist please, mister... um..."

Pennywise makes an exaggerated gasp, expression shocked, "Oh no! My apologies, I never introduced myself! I am Pennywise the Dancing Clown! And you are Cadence Adams! Hehehe! There, now we know each other!" he reaches out and with deft fingers ties the balloon string in a bow around her little wrist. "How's that?"

"That's perfect Mister Pennywise! Wait... how did you know my name?" Cadence asks as she smiles up at the balloon, bouncing it up and down by the string.

His smile fades to neutral as he watches her stare into the balloon. "Dear child, I know everything." Pennywise pauses as Cadence looks back at him. She looks him right in the eyes and he slowly smiles again. "Your favorite flavor of ice cream is cookies and cream. You love chicken nuggets. Oh! Come closer, come!" Pennywise waves her close like he wants to tell her a secret. With a giggle, Cadence moves closer and leans in. Pennywise puts a gentle hand on her shoulder his long fingers slowly wrapping around her as he cups his other hand by his mouth as he leans close to her ear, whispering, "You think that Adrian Thompson from down the street is a real cutie, and you want him to be your boyfriend" Pennywise giggles as Cadence slowly pulls away, laughing and blushing. Pennywise bares his straight white teeth in a broad smile at her.

"You really do know everything!" Cadence gasps with sudden excitement, "You should come meet my parents! Show them your magic tricks!"

Pennywise chuckles, his eyes becoming that piercing glowing shade of amber for a beat or two before he blinks and they are blue once more. He recalls the couple he consumed mere hours ago and wonders if he could pull that off again with the Adams... Leaving sweet Cadence as dessert. His stomach clenches in anticipation and he must actively try not to drool. He already must exhibit incredible self control with the child's sweet scent wafting over him from the scrape on her leg, still so fresh and gently smeared with just a hint of blood. His stomach growls and Cadence glances down at his belly before peering up at him with a giggle.

Pennywise slowly tilts his head with a small smile curving his brightly painted lips. He takes a breath, about to say something, but is cut off.

“Cadence!” The child’s mother calls from the front porch and both Pennywise and the child look over at the woman, the former bristling in mild annoyance at the interruption.

Christine peers around the side of the house to see Cadence sitting in the yard, holding her hand out to the side, but her hand is empty.

“Ooh, Mommy’s calling!” Pennywise chimes and Cadence glances back at him with a smile, grabbing his hand and pulling on him to follow her. He makes a small surprised sound at how forward this child is and allows himself to be pulled to his feet.

“Come get breakfast sweet pea, you can tell your imaginary friend you’ll be back after you eat.” Christine says, a little confused by how her daughter met with what looked to be very real resistance when pulling on her imaginary friend.

Cadence pulls Pennywise along behind her as she runs up to the front of the house and onto the porch, where she releases Pennywise’s hand and leaps into her mother’s waiting arms with a gleeful squeal. Pennywise strides up the steps and stands a few feet away from Christine as she stands with Cadence in her arms, her gaze passing right through Pennywise into her empty yard.

“Mommy! Mommy! This is my new friend, um P- Pennywise... the... um... Pennywise the Dancing Clown!” Cadence shouts excitedly as she leans back in her mother’s arms and reaches back for Pennywise, stretching her arm towards his hand. Pennywise narrows his eyes a little as he tilts his head, smiling.

“There’s no one there, sweetie.” Christine says, with a curious expression as she turns and walks to the front door. Cadence wriggles in her mother’s arms so that she can peer over her shoulder. Pennywise waves at her with a big smile, and chuckles. Christine freezes at the sound, her hand on the doorknob. Slowly, she turns around to see a man, a very tall, thin man, in a suit, standing on the first step of her porch, hands in his pant pockets. His short brown

hair is combed back and he has a very soft smile on his sharply featured face.

Cadence gasps with a wide smile, “aahh, magic!” she whispered as she watched him change his appearance.

“Oh... my goodness, I didn't see you there, sir.” Christine takes a step back as the man steps up onto the porch.

“No worries, ma’am.” Pennywise maintains his smile, but it does not reach his hungry eyes, which are dark and amber. He draws a long breath through his nose and lets it go slowly, looking deep into Christine’s eyes.

She is inexorably drawn closer to this man by some strange force. She feels like his eyes beckon to her. She sets Cadence down, “Go on and wash up, mommy will be right in.” Christine’s voice is airy and distant as she urges her daughter towards the door.

Cadence runs up to the door and opens it, turning back to look over her shoulder, “See you later, Mister Pennywise!” she waves her little hand and Pennywise leans to the side, tilting his head to look at Cadence from around her mother.

“See you soon, kiddo!” He says calmly. Cadence giggles and runs inside, closing the door behind her. Pennywise straightens and fixes his gaze back on the confused Christine. “Good morning, Christine. I’m Robert Gray. Some also know me as Pennywise.” He says smoothly, chuckling as he takes a single large step to close the distance between them, sliding his left hand gently behind her head, cradling her neck with his long fingers, as he lifts her chin up with his right index finger so that her eyes meet his. Her eyes are wide as she lets out a gasp at this man's forwardness. “That daughter of yours is a real treasure, Don't be mad at her for tearing her new pants.” Pennywise cocks his head to the side as his brightly glowing amber eyes widen with held in excitement, “There are *far worse* things that could happen....” His smile broadens, “Time to float.” He growls and Christine starts to pull back, suddenly nervous.

Pennywise tightens his grip on the back of her neck and allows his face to peel wide open, baring his hundreds of teeth and Christine’s

eyes go wide and glaze over white as she stares into the Deadlights as they glow from deep in It's throat. Pennywise releases the back of her head, lifting her only with the index finger he has pressed under her chin as she lifts into the air and hangs motionless, her feet a couple inches off the ground. A thick long tongue slides lazily out of his throat and glides wetly across Christine's face. He can taste the salt of fear on her skin. Her mind is his now deeply disturbed by his true form, and easily manipulated to extract the most exquisite terrors. Drawing his tongue back and closing his maw, Pennywise gazes up at the floating woman and swallows. "I look forward to our reunion." He chuckles, "don't go anywhere."

He steps over to the door, leaving Christine floating where she is, and turns the knob, taking on her exact appearance as he strides into the house and joins the family for breakfast.

He consumes the fried bacon and scrambled eggs with feigned interest, the food having little to no taste to him. He encourages Cadence to eat every last scrap of food, "to grow big and strong, don't you want to be strong, like daddy?" Pennywise looks over at Richard with an expectant look, and he clears his throat quickly, in the middle of a mouthful and pauses to flex his arms, a subtle blush rising on the man's cheeks as his daughter gazes in amazement at his defined muscles.

Richard smirks as he finishes his mouthful. "Mommy's right, if you wanna be strong like me, you gotta eat like me! Clean plate club, kiddo!"

Pennywise chuckles softly as Cadence starts to shovel her food into her mouth and chew as fast as possible. "Slow down there sweetie, you don't wanna choke." Pennywise warns in a gentle tone, wiping a little drool from his lips before anyone notices, and straightens to eat some more of his bacon.

Richard finishes his last bite of food and stands, taking his dishes and putting a hand on Pennywise's shoulder, giving it a tender squeeze as he walks past him to the kitchen sink. This makes Pennywise raise his brow curiously at this human gesture of affection. Affection is a rather foreign concept to him, being a creature that cultivates and feeds on fear, and lives a distinctly solitary life. He decides a soft

smile will suffice, and decides to put his hand over Richards as the man smiles, then departs for the kitchen, letting his hand slide lightly from Pennywise's shoulder. Pennywise blinks after him, trying to understand the unusual sensations caused by the simple gesture.

Pennywise narrows his shockingly blue eyes. Humans are such strange emotional creatures.

Slightly distracted, Pennywise pats Cadence on the top of her head as he stands. She smiles up at him before returning her attention to her breakfast. He turns from the table and takes his empty plate to the kitchen.

Walking up behind Richard, Pennywise puts the plate in the sink and presses his body against Richard's back, wrapping a hand around his belly and another around his chest as he has seen couples do in the past. Pennywise smiles as the man tenses for only a split second, a little taste of shock jolts momentarily through his body, and Pennywise's mouth floods with saliva. Such a small, delectable sample of fear, it only makes him want more. He swallows, his lips quirking into a smile as Richard relaxes and looks back over his shoulder with a warm smile.

Pennywise's eyes are heavily lidded and bright amber with hunger as Richard chuckles, "Hey babe, you startled me..." But then his expression changes. He looks confused. Pennywise swallows again, saliva is filling his mouth as the man's heart beats a little faster under his palm. "Your... eyes, Chrissy..."

Pennywise smiles, lifting his hand from around Richard's stomach to deftly slide a knife from the knife block outside of Richard's line of sight. "Frightening, aren't they?" Pennywise whispers, still using Christine's voice, as his smile only broadens. Richard turns in Pennywise's arms and Pennywise brings the knife lightly to the man's throat, his other hand still pressed to Richard's sternum to feel the quickened beat there. A visceral excitement churns within Pennywise as he feels the fear creeping into this man.

His eyes are wide as Pennywise gently drags the knife tip down Richard's throat, drawing a line of blood. "So haunting to imagine... the single person you thought you trusted most... turns out not to be

who they seemed to be.” As he slowly speaks, Pennywise’s voice effortlessly slides from Christine’s light register, down to his own familiar tenor as he presses the knife tip to the hollow of Richard’s neck and allows himself to shift into the form he took to trick Christine; that of Robert Gray.

Shock washes over the man’s face when he registers that a strange man is pressing his body against his, instead of his wife. There is another jolt of adrenaline and cortisol that rushes through the man, and Pennywise drinks it in. Richard’s expression shifts in a flash to one of anger, “Who are you, and where is my wife?” Richard growls aggressively, reaching up to grab the knife at his throat.

Pennywise makes a warning sound and snaps his hand away from Richard’s chest, grabbing the man’s wrist tightly as he presses the knife roughly against his throat. There’s the fear again, rising back to the surface. He is loving it. “Who am I? I am The Eternal. I am the consumer of children. The eater of *fear* and *terror*. I am the monster under your daughter’s bed. I am every nightmare you ever dreamed, every fear you ever felt.” Pennywise leans his face inches from Richard’s with a ferocious expression, “And I am here to consume you all.” Pennywise shifts form again into his favored form; that of the clown. Burning yellow eyes bore into Richard’s as powerful hands grip him roughly, and a maw filled by hundreds of long pointed teeth opens before him with a low growl, releasing a stench that makes him gag. The Deadlights swim before his eyes as Pennywise lets out another rough snarl like a feral predator as Richard screams, his vision filled by horrors he cannot fully comprehend.

Cadence stands in the kitchen doorway, witnessing the entire exchange, watching as her new friend, Pennywise’s entire head splits wide open, revealing needle sharp teeth by the hundreds, and a strange orange glow comes from deep within his throat. She drops her plate as her father screams in abject horror, and Cadence lets out a terrified scream of her own. “Daddy!” she cries.

Pennywise’s face snaps closed with a harsh sound and his head jerks down to look at Cadence with unnatural speed. His yellow glowing eyes narrow and he snarls at the child, baring sharp pointed teeth. The long knife he held drops to the kitchen floor.

“Cadey... Run...” Richard groans from his slumped position on the counter.

Pennywise jerks his head back to Richard and lets out a roar, snapping his jaw loudly shut before he turns back to face Cadence, hands outstretched and reaching for her as he leaps towards the child, mouth gaping and eyes pointing off to opposite sides. He lets out a terrible growl as he lands mere inches from the child, crouched over her like a bird of prey. His growl is guttural, like a big predatory beast.

Cadence screams in terror, frozen as she collapses onto her hands and knees in the shards of porcelain, covering her ears against the terrible sounds Pennywise is making.

He lets a low growl rumble in his chest as he gently unfurls the terrified crying child, the scent of fresh blood rising sharply to his nose. “Was that *scary*, Cadey?” Pennywise coos in a sweet voice, coaxing the child to look at him. His smile is toothy and wide, the needle like daggers having been replaced by flat human teeth, but his eyes are still a bright burning yellow.

Cadence peeks up, bottom lip trembling and tears staining her face. She nods meekly. Her palms are cut and her knees have porcelain clinging to them. She has a shard of porcelain sunk into her left palm.

Pennywise plucks each piece off, saving the one stuck in her hand for last. The clown gently cups her smaller hand in his palm, holding her fingers open with his slender thumb. Her blood stains his white glove as he pinches the shard between his other thumb and forefinger and hesitates, looking into the child's watery eyes.

She lets out a stuttering cry, “uh-uhn ow...” she whimpers. Pennywise gives the shard a tiny wiggle and Cadence whimpers again, “stoppit... that hurts...”

Pennywise pouts out his bottom lip and mimics her, “Stoppit, that hurts! Ah ha ha ha ha... Cry about it Cadey!” Pennywise goes from mocking to shouting mid-laugh and Cadence lets out a frightened sob. “I want to hear you scream to the heavens!” Pennywise leans a little closer and whispers, “I want to know how delicious your fear

tastes!” Pennywise leans close to her face with a wild, wide eyed smile, a growl rumbling deep in his chest. He wiggles the shard again and Cadence cries out, trying to pull her hand away, but his grip is like iron and she cannot budge. Pennywise can feel the waves of fright washing off of her. “That a girl, *fear me*. Show me how scared y-AAGHHNNN!” Pennywise cries out in shocked pain, arching his back away from the source of pain, his lips pulling away from his teeth as his eyes drift apart in opposing directions.

Richard stumbles back from behind Pennywise, leaving the six inch long butcher knife sticking out of the clown’s back, right between his shoulder blades. He reaches tremblingly for the knife block and grabs another, longer thinner filet knife as Pennywise lets out a predatory growl that could be felt in their chests as he slowly stands, gripping Cadence by the wrist and dragging her whimpering form with him as he rises to his full height and slowly turns to face Richard.

“You know, I was going to save her for last. Until I started playing with you. And *you*, you offered me so much.... *raw* material to work with, I couldn’t resist playing some more. But then... sweet little Cadence decided to be nosey.” Pennywise roughly jerks her out in front of himself and lifts her by the wrist, presenting her to her father as she hangs several feet above the floor. “But now, it looks like you will be going first after all. Then I suppose I’ll revisit Christine. She has been so patiently waiting on the porch for me. Oh! You can watch, Cadey! AH HAHAHA HAHA! This will be FUN!” Pennywise shouts as he throws her into the dining room. “Now be good and wait your turn, child.” He growls as he looks back at Richard.

“Cadence! RUN!” Richard shouts and the child obeys, disappearing beyond a wall. Pennywise reaches to his back and pulls the knife free and immediately throws it directly at Richard. The blade sinks deep into his left shoulder and he cries out stumbling back against the refrigerator. Pennywise strides over to him and grabs him by the throat with a vicious snarl, his face twisting and mouth widening before he lurches forward and grabs the handle of the knife and rips the blade roughly free, dragging a pained cry from the man. Throwing the knife to the floor with a clatter, Pennywise grabs Richard’s left arm by the elbow and bites clean through his left arm at the shoulder. Pennywise shoves the man roughly away, but not

before getting twelve inches of knife sunk into the left side of his chest, under his arm.

Pennywise cries out as the knife sinks up to its handle between his ribs, blood spewing from his mouth as he recoils and shoves Richard away. Blood floats up from his wounds and from his nose and mouth now. He looks down at the stab wound as anger rises within him. He grunts in pain, splattering the floor with blood from his nose as his blood continues to defy gravity and float upwards. Were he a being of this plane, that would have been a mortal blow. But He is not, and now he is deeply enraged. Enraged and very *very* hungry.

Without fully intending to, Pennywise's form shifts into a more horrible feral appearance, and in his fury he lunges forward at Richard, mouth agape, and closes his teeth around the man's torso, taking a massive bite out of his chest with a sickening crunch of bone and the squelch of soft tissue. The slick hot sensation of vital organs in his mouth brings a sound like a purr from his throat as he swallows. His long clawed fingers spread threateningly as he watches Richard drop to the floor, a gaping wound spread across his chest so deep his spine can be seen. Strange wet sputtering sounds gurgle from the man's destroyed chest as he bleeds on the floor.

Almost second guessing his choice to take on another pair of adults, Pennywise leans down and lifts the dying man to his mouth, biting clean through his shoulders to remove his head. After that, he finishes Richard off in massive bites, leaving the kitchen littered with blood, broken porcelain, and the two bloody knives as he swallows his last bite and closes his mouth. He draws a long breath through his nose, reigning in his rage and seeking out the child's scent. He can feel the flesh around his stab wounds stitching back together with a pleasant tingle and he wipes some blood from his nose, licking his bloody lips.

A growl rumbles in his chest when he hears voices outside of the house. With an anticipatory breath, he strides quickly for the door.

He passes a hall on his right as he makes his way to the door. As he reaches for the doorknob he freezes when he hears a small sound; shifting shoes against hardwood floor, with a little dirt between them. He snaps his head to the right, gazing curiously down the hall.

Four wide eyes stare back at him down the partly lit hallway. Cadence peers out from behind Christine, who, Pennywise now realizes has a firearm of some sort, aimed shakily at him. The clown lets out an amused laugh, “Well, well, well, well, well. What do we have here?” Pennywise croons in a sickly sweet tone as he turns to fully face down the hall, a toothy smile spread across his face.

“Mommy...” the worried voice of Cadence carries down the hall and it makes Pennywise drool with anticipation.

“Stay behind me.” Christine commands harshly, never taking her eyes off the looming clown on the opposite end of the hallway. Her eyes jump from him, to the door, and then back for a moment, and Pennywise’s expression darkens. She cannot escape, and she can empty those bullets into his body and he will keep coming, it doesn’t matter. His stomach growls as more saliva pools in his mouth. The fear is so *thick* down this hallway, Pennywise almost can’t keep it together. It’s time to move things right along.

“Seems I underestimated you, Christine. You are a *resilient* one.” Pennywise takes a step towards them, and Christine raises the gun a little higher, shaking but determined. Pennywise bares his teeth, “Reminds me of someone... Beverly was her name. She managed to get away, but that’s no issue,” Pennywise cackles, taking another two steps towards Christine. He can see the tears running down her cheeks. “She’ll come back to Derry soon enough. Her and her six damnable friends. And this time, I won’t let them get away. Just like I can’t let you get away.”

Another three slow steps and Pennywise is standing mere feet away from Christine. He smiles, leaning forward so that his forehead presses against the barrel of the pistol. His eyes peer up at Christine like an open invitation. “Go ahead. *Try* and stop me. But here’s a friendly reminder...” Pennywise suddenly whips his head up, mouth gaping, and bites the gun, severing several of Christine’s fingers as his jaws cut through the metal with a screeching snap of his teeth. Christine screams as she recoils in shock, staring at her hands, all of her fingers nearly completely missing now, and pouring blood. Cadence wails and cowers in the corner at the grisly sight of her mother’s fingerless hands.

Pennywise lets the mangled metal and fingers drop from his wet maw with a loud clatter and a collection of small ‘thunks’ onto the wood. In a blink, he closes the distance between himself and Christine, so that as he wraps both his hands around her throat, his body presses tightly against hers, “YOU CAN'T FUCKING STOP ME!” Pennywise bellows, shaking his whole body with the ferocity behind his words.

Christine trembles, her ruined bleeding hands pawing at the gloved ones wrapped tightly around her neck as Pennywise’s unnaturally warm body burns against hers as he looms over her. She is beyond uncomfortable as tears stream down her burning cheeks. She can hear Cadence crying over the ringing in her ears. Her eyes fly all over the hall, searching for something... *anything* to help her daughter, but when her eyes fall back on Pennywise, she feels frozen. His burning amber eyes feel like fire in her skull as they draw her in. He snarls in a low register that she feels vibrate against her body. She halfway fights to get away, but those eyes hold her fast, and the gloved hands on her throat are impenetrable iron.

“MOMMYYYYYY” Cadence screams suddenly and Pennywise lets one eye roll to the side in curiosity. He sees the child standing a few feet behind her, with something metallic and long in her hands. “Leave my mommy alone Mister Pennywise. You’re being mean, and I don’t want you here anymore.” Tears flow from her eyes.

Pennywise cannot help the single chuckle that escapes his lips as he now turns his full attention to the child, tilting his head sharply to the side to regard her. “Ah... ha ha ha! That’s the point, cupcake. You’re supposed to be terrified of- mmphh!” a sudden sharp kick to his groin cuts him off. Brow deeply furrowed, he looks back at Christine who has an angry look on her face as she drives her knee sharply up into his groin a second time. “That is *very* rude, you know.”

Christine rams her knee into his groin another three times, and he simply stares down at her, each time her knee connects with him her determination crumbles further into fear as they have no effect on It. Christine has tears in her eyes.

“Are you *quite* finished?” Pennywise snaps in a short tone, lips pressing into a thin, hard line. Chin trembling and tears pouring from

reddened eyes, Christine nods weakly. "Thank you." He snips as he harshens his glare, "Now, time to float with your beloved husband." Pennywise chuckles with an unexpected smirk, "He was delicious, by the way!" Pennywise now openly cackles as his lips part, and then his head peels apart, pointed teeth emerging from his distending jaws, revealing his maw and the glowing Deadlights.

He lifts Christine to his mouth and she struggles for only a split second before going limp and pliant in his hands. Pennywise pauses, tilting his terrible head to the side and closing his mouth, his yellow eyes pointing off in opposite directions as he looks down towards Cadence. "You know what a monster looks like Cadey?" Pennywise chuckles, but it sounds more like a horrible growling cackle. His body starts to shift and deform as Pennywise reverts to his true, cosmic form. Cadence screams in horror as It reveals It's amorphous form, lit from within its inky blackness by the Deadlights.

It still holds Christine by the neck, and in a swift motion, she is consumed by the form that fills the space before her to the point of pushing away the walls and floor above.

Cadence cannot understand what she sees. It is both darkness and light. A shape her mind has no words for. Perhaps a spider or a tentacled sea creature, but neither truly fit. All she can do is scream as she gawks at the interdimensional creature in true horror.

Piercing, searching, prodding, glowing orange eyes bore into the very fabric of her existence. Then, a single word thunders in her ears and inside of her mind and through her entire body at once. "*ME.*" Cadence screams as It consumes her, her soul feeding the Deadlights as It gorges itself on her fear.

The Adams' family home collapses around It and It simply rises through the rubble and coalesces as Pennywise the Dancing Clown on the front lawn; right beside the jungle gym, where he first laid eyes on Cadence.

Pennywise turns and strides away, belly churning, ready for more. As fun as the challenge of facing down adults was, Pennywise is ready to play with his food a little more, with a little less risk to his general well being, as it is quite annoying having to wait for his form to

regenerate after sustaining injury.

He makes his way to the playground in town with a large cluster of red balloons in his grip as he hums an old circus tune.

If you unknowingly passed him on the sidewalk, you would swear you smelled hot fresh popcorn and cotton candy, fresh funnel cakes and corn dogs.

End of Chapter Two.

3. Chapter Three

Summary for the Chapter:

A short little fun one, where Pennywise does a thing I thought would be cool.

I'm actually working on two IT fics now. The original chapter three took on a life all its own, and now it's a stand alone story that I have been developing quite a bit, and have big plans for. I'll post it here soon! But, for now, have more murder!

Notes for the Chapter:

Derry, Derry,
Quaint, but scary,
How does your death count grow?
Every twenty seven years,
You face your fears,
And pray that hungry clown won't show.

These two children are going to be far too easy, Pennywise muses to himself. Their simple, distracted brains are so easy to manipulate.

Pennywise smiles. When you wander away from prying, watchful adult eyes, anything can happen.

The clown lets out a gravelly chuckle. It's only been perhaps four days since he feasted on that family. Yet, his hunger only grows, as he watches these two oblivious children stroll care free, right towards where he hides in the brush at the edge of the field in the shadow of the looming Derry Standpipe.

Pennywise glances skyward, narrowing his intense blue eyes at the bright sunny sky. He reaches out and manipulates the air around him, to suit his intentions. As the sun disappears behind some fluffy cumulus clouds, a warm breeze kicks up. The two children seem fully ignorant of the chill in the late spring air as they run giggling into the bushes, following the sweet scent of cotton candy, and the salty

buttery aroma of hot fresh popcorn.

The five year old girl and a six year old boy burst into the small clearing where Pennywise sits cross-legged, looking down at his legs. The children skid to a stop and stare in mild shock and confusion as Pennywise lifts his face slowly to look at them with what is, at first, a blank expression. His eyes are bright blue and his dark red painted lips remain slack for a couple seconds before his mouth stretches and curves into a wide, amiable smile, showing off his slightly off-white teeth.

“Well, hello there!” Pennywise starts in a low playful tone. His tall, lanky body is arched over his legs so that he can rest his elbows on his knees. But this position means he must turn his head up at a hard angle to look straight out at the children. He makes a low chuckle, giving his shoulders a little shake to jingle his bells. “You kiddos ever seen a clown before?” Pennywise asks as the kids take a step closer. They stand perhaps five feet away from him now.

The boy shakes his head and the girl shakes hers after seeing the boy’s silent gesture.

Pennywise lets out an energetic giggle, “Oh boy! Well, I can do magic tricks!” Pennywise continues, slowly with anticipation building in his tone. A little drool slides down the middle of his bottom lip. “Wanna see?” He asks quickly, blue eyes and smile widening.

The boy and girl gasp and shuffle closer. The boy speaks first, “yes please, Mister!”

The little girl nods rapidly in excitement, her little bouncy blonde pigtails swaying with her excitement.

Pennywise giggles again, “Well, step right up! How's about a balloon!”

The children cheer in agreement and Pennywise laughs, shaking his bells. Straightening, Pennywise extends both of his gloved hands out before him, palms up, as he slowly fans his fingers out wide. “Nothing in my hands...” he starts, in a low voice as he flips his

palms down suddenly, fingers still spread wide. The children gasp. Pennywise looks up with excitement in his expression as he balls his right hand into a quick fist and the children stare wide eyed. Slowly, with his own eyes wide, and mouth shaped into an expression of awe, Pennywise turns his fist over as he hovers his other hand above it. With the same tension building slowness, Pennywise poises his thumb and forefinger to pinch as he simultaneously opens his fist. He pinches the fabric in the palm of his right glove and the children hear the distinctive sound of taut, stretching latex, like an inflated balloon being rubbed. Pennywise snaps his gaze on the kids with a gasp, "Oh! Did'ja hear that?" he asks, still pinching the palm of his right glove with his thumb and forefinger. His last three fingers are fanned out gracefully. The children nod, eyes wide and curious.

Smiling an open mouthed smile, Pennywise slowly pulls on his glove, and right before the children's eyes, he pulls a stretched out red balloon, right out of his palm, and as the red balloon stretches out of his hand it fills with air, as if by magic. They gape as Pennywise feigns a shocked expression as the knot pops free from the cotton of his glove with a rubbery sound, and the balloon snaps into its proper shape; round and full of air. The knot is followed by a long white string tied to it. The kids laugh in awe as Pennywise pulls the balloon away from his hand with a broad, showy smile, still pinching the top between his fingers as the string slides from his palm. He pulls until his arm is straight. Slowly, he turns his right hand so his palm faces to his left and pinches the white string between thumb and forefinger, fanning out the fingers of his left hand as he releases the balloon from where he pinched it, swinging his arm to the side with a sweeping gesture, as if to say '*Ta Da!*'. The children gasp and cheer with wide eyed wonder on their faces.

Pennywise presents the balloon to the girl, his smile intensifying as a bit of drool drips from his lip, as he extends his arm towards the girl, who lights up and starts to reach for the balloon.

"Oh no!" Pennywise suddenly exclaims, making the children jump, their expressions instantly worried. "It seems I miscounted my balloons! There's only *one* balloon... and *two* little children!" Pulling the balloon back, he reaches his left hand towards the string and pinches just above where he holds the string with his right. Then,

slowly, he pulls his hands in opposite directions and the one string becomes two. Then, as he pulls the two strings apart, they separate slowly, all the way up to the knot. Then, the sound of two balloons being rubbed roughly together can be heard before the one balloon suddenly becomes two and they jump apart, now each floating on its own string. The children gasp and Pennywise chuckles as he hands them each a red balloon.

“Did you like my magic trick?” Pennywise almost purrs as he uncrosses his legs slowly, sliding them beneath himself to kneel now. He crosses his arms over his chest as the children nod energetically. “Well, Pennywise The Dancing Clown has another magic trick to show you.” His eyes slowly begin to become yellow, as drool begins to fill his now slack mouth and slowly spills down his bottom lip and chin. “Wanna see?” his voice is nearly a growl as his left eye begins to drift to the side.

The girl makes a hesitant, uncomfortable noise, but the boy does not seem to pick up on Pennywise’s shift in tone, and he starts jumping in excitement. “Yes! YES! More! MORE!” he cheers, bouncing the balloon wildly.

Pennywise cannot help but grow excited by the child and he lets out an overly energetic cackle as he chants with the boy, “ *YES yes more MORE ! AH HAHAAHAHAHAAA*” he suddenly throws his arms out to the sides and they flail around like strange rubber snakes with hands for heads, before they suddenly change shape into two giant praying mantis arms. Pennywise lets go a long wicked laugh as the children both scream in sudden horror. He snaps the arms out and with a hungry snarl, snatches both children around their midsection.

The balloons pop as the rest of Pennywise’s body grows and deforms into the shape of a massive green praying mantis. The children scream and cry as they hang from the powerful crushing limbs, and Pennywise brings the girl up to his huge triangular insectoid head. His mouthparts glisten in a horrible combination of hard glossy chitin and dripping saliva. They work hungrily, opening and closing and shifting as Pennywise pulls her up to his mouth and begins chewing off chunks of her arms and torso. His long graceful antennae swish delicately back and forth, occasionally sweeping down to touch the

boy as he cries, bleeding and broken in Pennywise's other horrible claw.

The girl is consumed in under a minute and when the mantis turns it's terrifying, bloodstained head to look at the boy, he lets out a whimper. Oh yes, a giant mantis threatening to eat you is scary, sure. But this boy's deepest fear is a different bug. A bug whose form Pennywise is *very* comfortable in.

The mantis releases the boy and he falls five feet to the dirt. He is bloody and going into shock, but somehow he keeps his eyes on Pennywise as the mantis deforms and boils into an amorphous blob before eight huge hairy legs erupt from the floating grey-brown blob on all sides and a giant tarantula lands on the ground before him. Eight glossy orange eyes stare emptily down at him as two massive fangs shift and move in front of the arachnid's drooling mouth. Pennywise stares in a state of arousal, watching the fear bloom on this boy's face as his mind comprehends what stands before him.

"Do you like Pennywise's magic tricks, Carter?" The giant spider rumbles. The boy is hyperventilating and dragging himself away through the dirt. "Oh, I think you *do* , dontcha boy! Spiders are your *favorite* !" Pennywise continues as he walks closer to the boy and looms above him. Using his dexterous pedipalps, he pulls the boy closer and flips him onto his back. He lets his heavy fangs hang closer to the boy, dripping huge droplets of venom as the boy looks up into the spider's mouth with horror. He screams, wetting himself.

Pennywise lurches down, slamming his fangs into the soft dirt once, twice, three times, each time just barely missing the boy as he screams beneath him.

"That's it... *FEAR* me..." Pennywise growls as he jabs his fangs deep into the boy's shoulders and lifts him to his mouthparts. The boy screams a blood curdling scream that is cut short as Pennywise crushes his skull in his mouthparts and begins slowly masticating the boy into a bloody pulp as he consumes him.

As the creature eats, one of the boy's shoes is knocked from his foot. It is the only piece of evidence that will be found amongst the bloody

smears in the dirt.

The spider, now finished eating, takes a moment to clean its pedipalps and mouthparts of blood. Satisfied with its cleanliness, the spider shrinks and melds together into a floating shapeless grey form. If anyone had been there to see it, they would have glimpsed the orange burning glow of the Deadlights for a millisecond before the shape coalesced into a 6'4" clown.

The faint tinkle of bells drifts across the field as Pennywise retreats across Kansas street and into a storm drain.

Pennywise was barely ten feet into the sewers before he heard a woman's scream rip through the warm spring air. He pauses, smiling. His stomach tightens hungrily, yearning to be filled ever fuller that terror, that fear. With a slow blink, Pennywise walks on, deeper into his sewers, as throngs of squeaking rats rush through the filthy, inches deep water ahead of him like some sort of macabre escort. Any rodents too slow are either crushed carelessly under his feet, or simply drop dead in his wake as he heads for His Tower to digest.

End of Chapter Three.

4. Chapter Four

Summary for the Chapter:

This chapter happened very quickly, over the span of a few hours. It's a little different. Hope y'all like it.

Notes for the Chapter:

Another short but very graphic chapter.

Pennywise watches, mostly secluded in thick saw grass and cattails in a marshy drainage pond, as two men mercilessly beat a homeless vagrant in a dark parking lot beside the Derry Mall. It is well past midnight.

Violence always draws him in. He is nothing if not a little curious, and his time on earth has offered him plenty of front row seats to be entertained by human misfortune and violence. He preys on the victims with such ease at times, it actually amuses him.

The attackers stink of testosterone and alcohol. The smell makes the corners of his mouth turn down. Males often have that stench of dominance about them. The vagrant however, smells just the way he likes; terrified.

As the two men knock down the homeless man for the third time in the past two minutes, one starts kicking him in the gut while the other, taller man pulls a flask of alcohol from a back pocket and takes a deep swig.

The vagrant starts to drag himself towards the drainage pond, hoping perhaps they will not follow him into the smelly filth of the swampy water and mud.

Pennywise rises from the water and walks closer to the edge of the reeds as the vagrant drags his knees under himself and crawls within feet of the edge of the reeds. Pennywise can smell the sweet aroma of pain and fear and his watchful blue eyes quickly shift to a glowing hungry orange. He steps out of the reeds before the man and grabs

him by the neck, lifting him as he stands, staring out at the two drunk attackers. The vagrant hangs limply from his hand as he whimpers in pain.

Pennywise has the attackers' attention now. He steps fully from the reeds and onto the pavement. He drips with water, but has no mud on him.

"The fuck you want, freak?"

"This some kind of joke? Tryna scare us off?"

Pennywise is easily a foot taller than one of the men and a good six inches taller than the other, the one with the flask. He doesn't have to try to be intimidating, he cuts an imposing silhouette. He tilts his head, face devoid of any expression. The man in his grip reaches weakly up to grab Pennywise's wrist, another pained whimper escaping him as he is drug onto the pavement. With deliberately slow movements, Pennywise lifts the man bodily before himself, his head eye level with the clown as his feet dangle four inches from the pavement.

Pennywise peeks around the weakly struggling man's head with a toothy smile. The men look confused. One moves forward a single step and Pennywise crushes the man's neck in his hand with a sickening pop of his spine being severed. His body falls limp and both men jump in shock.

Pennywise releases the man in his grip and the body crumples to the pavement heavily. He smiles a closed-lip smile, the corners of his eyes crinkle into little crows feet. The men look from the dead body to Pennywise's face. Horror creeps into their expressions and Pennywise's smile disappears. "Scared yet?" Pennywise asks in a low tone as he lowers his arm back to his side.

The shorter man scowls, "The fuck you sposed to be, a clown?"

Pennywise chuckles, "I can be whatever you want me to be." Effortlessly reaching into the man's mind, he sees the form of his ideal woman: tall, busty, wide hips, long brunette hair. Pennywise easily becomes that woman, his hair growing long and lustrous. The

clown paint on his face chips and falls away to reveal the woman's soft lovely features. Under the silk of his clown suit, his body shifts and changes and with a deft yank, he rips the silk away with his right hand, in a sweeping gesture across his chest to reveal a sensual female body, perfectly tanned and smooth, and naked. Pennywise steps out of his boots and pulls off his gloves as he walks slowly towards the short man, his hips swaying just enough to make the crotch of the shorter man's jeans tighten uncomfortably.

"What in the fuck..." the taller man whispers, his own jeans far too tight in the crotch now too. Pennywise casts him a sultry glance before he steps close to the shorter man, pressing his body against him, he spreads his right hand on the small of the man's back, pulling him closer, feeling the heat and the underlying arousal. He can sense the tingle of fear in the man, fear of something the man cannot quite understand. But his arousal gets the better of him and Pennywise suddenly has rough, callused hands groping his rear and sliding down the backs of his thighs. His eyes narrow at the strange sensation of hands squeezing the soft parts of his form. Pennywise has never actually been touched by his prey in this way, and he is not entirely certain of his opinion of it. It is strange, but not entirely unpleasant.

"Hey, Carl, the fuck're you doin man?" the taller man stakes a step closer, his tone deeply unsettled. His brain is telling him that there is something wrong with what he is seeing, and it scares him. Pennywise looks sharply over at him, stopping him in his tracks with piercing yellow eyes. The man recoils a little, his hands raised defensively. "Carl, I got a baaaad feelin' about this..." Carl ignores him, his hands sliding up to fondle those perfect breasts.

Pennywise smiles at the taller man, "Rightly so. You should be terrified of me, and yet your simple minds give in to your base instincts to procreate." he pauses, his expression unreadable. "You ignore the viper in the grass. Like a sailor, falling for a siren." his voice is soft, low but undeniably feminine.

"I'll take The viper, if she's gonna look like this, I ain't questioning it. Look at her, Pete..." Carl says, his voice thick with arousal as he leans close to wrap his lips around the soft curve where Pennywise's neck meets his shoulder. Brows arched at how easily this man was manipulated, Pennywise allows the man to indulge himself. Arousal

tastes almost as good as fear. *Almost* . For now, it is a keen distraction. Five feet away, the other man, Peter, steep in the sweet aroma of fear, and Pennywise is so hungry for it.

As a rough hand slides up the inside of his right thigh, Pennywise draws a somewhat sharper breath and leans his body into the man, and Carl responds by pressing his lips into the skin on the side of Pennywise's throat. Carl moans, his erection pressing against Pennywise through his jeans as he huffs against Pennywise's neck, lost in his arousal as he starts to slowly rut his hips against Pennywise. "You're so perfect."

"I am the perfect predator." Pennywise whispers into his ear. Those words send a dagger of adrenaline and cortisol into the man's heart. He freezes, recalling his situation quite suddenly. Carl draws a shaky breath, tilting his head back to look up at Pennywise as he gazes calmly down at him. His eyes are a glowing yellow, edged in red. He can feel the man's heart pounding against him as horror chills his blood.

Pennywise gently slides his right hand up over the curve of Carl's ass, his fingers sliding up his tailbone to the small of his back. Carl stares up at Pennywise, eyes wide as drool collects on the creature's bottom lip. Those fingertips shift and grow into pointed dagger-like claws. "And now..." Pennywise says in a cold tone, his voice having returned to his more familiar masculine register, "I will feast on you all." Carl draws a horrified gasp as Pennywise gently angles those claws perpendicular to the small of Carl's back, and with a sharp easy motion, he slips those claws into his spine, severing his spinal cord. His expressionless face stares down at Carl as agony and silent horror contort his features. The drool drips from Pennywise's lips onto Carl's chin as he gapes up at him in agonized shock.

His body is held up by the claws in his spine, and his arms numbly reach up and paw at Pennywise's shoulders and upper arms, before the monster slips the claws free, allowing Carl to drop limply to the ground, his head bouncing off Pennywise's supple breasts and making them jiggle a bit as he lets out an agonized moan.

Pennywise watches the man drop before slowly looking over at Peter, who stares, white as a sheet into Pennywise's expressionless face.

Perhaps five feet stand between them, but Pennywise can sense the terrified pounding of the man's heart as he gapes in terror.

The image of the woman falls away like crumbling paint to reveal Peter's deepest fear. Were his friend in any shape to joke, he would be laughing stitches in his sides at Peter, because Pennywise has taken the form of the alien xenomorph from the classic 'Alien' movie series, starring Sigourney Weaver. And Carl thinks that's the most hilarious movie series to have ever been made, a literal joke.

But it is not a joke for Peter. Ever since he was a little boy, the xenomorphs haunted his nightmares. Traumatized by his older brother, who would put on masks and jump at him when he wasn't paying attention. He once got a cardboard cutout of one from the movie theater and taped it to Peter's ceiling over his bed. Peter didn't sleep for two and a half months after that incident. Now, as Peter stands face to face with his childhood fear, he is once again paralyzed. The flask in his hand falls to the pavement with a metallic clatter, spilling alcohol onto the filthy asphalt.

"Fear." Pennywise growls through the teeth of the xenomorph, raising threatening clawed hands and swishing the deadly barbed tail behind himself as he steps towards the man, mouth pouring thick drool. "such a powerful thing."

Peter is paralyzed by it. The movies were realistic enough to truly frighten and unsettle him every single time they were on screen, even when he saw the movies as an adult, but he always had that nagging feeling as he got older that the xenomorph puppets never looked quite real enough, their movements just a little too stiff. But this creature standing before him now is more real and horrible than any of the movies could have ever depicted. This monster is feral and lithe like a hungry predatory creature. And its sights are set on him. He lets out a scared sound as his boots shift on the pavement, the gravel crunching beneath his soles and the xenomorph twitches at the sound, its head tilting sharply.

The xenomorph leaps at him with such speed and suddenness, all Peter can do is let out a scream as claws wrap around his upper arms and his body is slammed into the pavement. The wind is knocked from Peter's lungs and he tries to gasp, his diaphragm spasming

violently.

With a roar straight out of the 'Alien movies, the xenomorph lowers its head and plunges its secondary mouthparts deep into the man's right shoulder, shattering his collarbone. The man drags in a breath and a scream rips sharply from his lungs as it tears off a chunk of flesh, which it then swallows. Then the mouthparts rocket out again. The man bellows his agony as the teeth rip away pieces of his ribs this time. Then the mouthparts punch sharply through the man's sternum and he lets out a choked gasp as its teeth sink into hot soft throbbing muscle.

His deepest irrational fear is being realized, and the man lets out a choked scream as he bleeds, his heart in the jaws of a xenomorph.

Irritated by the inefficiently small mouth this form possesses, Pennywise snarls and allows the clown form to rip it's way out of the xenomorph, his mouth already gaping wide as he lifts the bloody man to his maw and bites clean through his neck and shoulders. A wash of delicious blood and meat fills his mouth and slides hotly down his throat and his eyes roll back into his head as he sinks his hundreds of teeth in for another bite. The monster cannot stop himself from letting out a soft, pleased growl.

Carl, paralyzed at his hips, but still very much conscious, watches in horror as his friend is eaten like a candy bar, not but a few feet away. He can hear the crunch of bones being crushed as this shape shifting beast takes massive bites out of his dead friend.

The creature rises to its feet; gripping by the left buttock, what remains of Carl's friend Peter: his legs, hips, and a small part of his abdomen. All that remains of the 250+ pound man as the clown turns to face Carl.

Carl vomits at the horrific sight as Pennywise lifts the carcass to his mouth and takes another bite, cleaving cleanly through the right femur with a sharp crack. The rest of the severed right leg drops to pavement with a sick thud, making Carl heave and vomit again as Pennywise gnaws on the remnants of the hip in his hand, the other leg limply swinging in the air.

The clown steps closer to Carl and squats down, biting through the middle of the femur with a loud crunch. He chews once or twice before swallowing and smiling a bloody smile at the paralyzed and nauseous man. "More gruesome than you could have ever imagined, isn't it, Carl. Doesn't quite sound like it does in the movies," Pennywise slides his grip on the leg down to the ankle, grabbing the knee with his other hand. With a sharp motion, he breaks the shin in half, the bone jutting sharply out through the skin. Carl hurls again, but there is nothing in his stomach. "does it? Sounds a little sharper, a little more wet." He roughly rips the two broken halves apart, the remains of the thigh swinging limply in his grip as Carl gapes his mouth open and drops the man's foot and half his shin into his mouth and swallows it whole, before doing the same with the knee.

"There's a little bit of his leg left over... if you're hungry?" Pennywise says as he reaches back and grabs the ankle of the other leg and drags it over. It makes a wet sliding sound across the asphalt before Pennywise lifts it up in front of Carl's sickened face, the knee bent as half the thigh hangs limply, torn muscle and tendons hang like ribbons from the stump. Pennywise cackles before he bites the leg in half and swallows the flesh, bone, and cloth whole before tossing back the rest of the leg and foot, boot and all.

As his gaze falls back on Carl, the man lets out a horrified sound, trying to drag himself away. Like he suddenly realized he was next on the menu.

Pennywise stands and walks over to crouch in front of Carl, cutting off his attempt at escape. He leans down close to his face and smiles. "Time to float, Carl." His mouth peels open and his throat gapes as the Deadlights rise up into his mouth and take Carl's consciousness. His eyes become milky white as his body lifts from the pavement, guided by slender digits, as Pennywise stands and with little effort, he swallows the man's broken body, as a snake would its prey. Whole.

Then, turning, he strides over to the dead vagrant and wraps his slender digits around the man's broken neck. Standing, he drags him into the swampy water, disappearing under the inky surface of the pond to return to his lair deep in the sewers.

End of Chapter Four.

5. Chapter Five

Caroline is terrified of water. She has been all her life. Even as an independent, self-made 22 year old woman. She has had her struggles, even outside of her journey through transitioning.

When she was only seven, her big brother Arlo, who was only 19, drowned while swimming at the quarry. He dove underwater and never surfaced. The divers who located his body the next day said that the drawstring of his trunks appeared to have been somehow tied in a knot around the branch of a submerged tree.

Periodically, Caroline has horrible night terrors involving her trying to save Arlo from the murky green water of the Derry quarry. Tonight is one of those nights. The third in a row to be exact.

Caroline wakes with a horrified scream, sitting upright in bed, drenched in sweat and tears pouring down her cheeks. She throws her covers off and swings her legs over the edge of the bed, catching her breath for a moment. Flashes of her brothers horrifying waterlogged face linger long after the fleeting recollections of the dream have faded. Dragging her fingers through her hair across her scalp, she reaches for the small glass of water on her bedside table and downs it.

A cold trickle of sweat dribbles down her naked spine and gooseflesh erupts over her body as she gives a shudder. It almost felt like cold slender clammy fingers just ghosted down her spine.

She heaves a sigh and slides back into bed, shivering now. In the morning, she is going to that damn quarry.

Eight o'clock the following morning indeed finds Caroline standing at the edge of the twenty six foot cliff, looking down into the dark emerald green water that fills the old quarry. Churning anxiety and trepidation swirls like a maelstrom in her gut. Her logical mind tells her there are obviously no monsters in this water; some big fish and a turtle or two, sure. But no Nessy. No Lake Placid super croc. No dark leathery scaled creature with webbed hands that ties swim trunks to submerged trees, and grabs ankles from within the dark murky water

column.

Her eyes tell her that she sees dark slithering shapes just beneath the surface, and ripples on the water from some great creature slipping silently through the jade water. For a span of two seconds, she does not believe her eyes. The splash that startles her in the following moments, however, wrenches a frightened and shocked scream from her throat as she leaps back from the edge. Her boots crunch and slide in the loose scree and gravel, causing her to lose her footing and fall painfully to her backside.

There is no way. No way at all that what she saw was real. She was hallucinating. Had to be. But... how to explain the huge splash? The ripples from it are still spreading across the still surface of the quarry lake. Heart in her throat and shaking, she drags herself sorely to her feet and cautiously steps closer to the edge, peering down again into the pit.

“Don't slip!” A playful voice, uncomfortably lilting up and down, sounds behind her. The sudden sound of it sends lightning through her veins. Caroline screams, dropping to her hands and knees in shock. Her hands grip the jagged edge of the cliff and her eyes blow wide as she watches chunks of dirt and gravel plummet twenty six feet to the water below. Slowly, whole body alight with nerves, she backs away from the edge before turning around slowly.

The young man standing no more than fifteen feet away from her is dead. His skin is sickeningly pale, sloughing off in waterlogged pieces, rotting and bloated. His eyes are clouded and bulging from his skull, which shows gleaming and bone white where chunks of rotted waterlogged flesh have slid away or been nibbled by fish. One hand is missing. His muck-stained swim trunks are faded and hang loose just below his jutting hips, the drawstring pulled taut and wrapped in a tangled mess around a heavy branch that sits on the ground beside him. He is soaking wet and dripping water.

Caroline feels the urge to vomit as she stares at her dead brother. Another horrified cry bubbles up in her throat as he takes a shifting step towards her, the heavy sodden branch sliding heavily across the ground, gouging a deep furrow in the dirt. “Mom always said.... To mind the turtles... they tend to... *bite* .” the corpse gurgles out the

words wetly, around fetid water that dribbles darkly from his mouth as he takes another wobbly step closer. “Mind the *TURTLES* Collin! They’ll take your TOES CLEAN OFF! HAHAAHAHAHA!” The corpse of Arlo shouts, more water pouring from his mouth as he wiggles the stump of one arm out to the side as he lifts the opposite foot out to the other side, the foot missing three toes and some of the foot itself.

Bile rises in her throat at the sound of her birth name. Anger, hurt, and disgust rise in a tide as Caroline scoots back a bit on her rear.

“Awe, what’s the matter, was it something I said, Collin? Don’t be rude. Speak up!”

“That’s NOT my *fucking* name!” Caroline snarls, tears slipping from her eyes. She wants to vomit, her brain is so horribly confused right now, and she feels like her sanity is slipping. The sickly sweet smell of putrefying waterlogged flesh lingers in her nose and the horrible sound of the body moving makes her head spin.

The corpse shudders closer, that branch dragging and scraping, making a horrible sound as his waterlogged feet squelch and slap wetly on the ground. “Ooh, touchy touchy.... What’s in a name, anyway, Kid? I go by plenty myself, but I’m not here to shoot the breeze, am I. No, I’m here...” Wet step, “to tell you...” sliding waterlogged branch scraping on gravel, “to *mind the gap* !” the corpse cackles cruelly, spewing water as it hisses at her.

Caroline feels sick, absolutely ill as one of her hands suddenly slips out into the void of air behind her. She screams, falling flat on her back and her neck pops a bit as her head dips sharply over the cliff. She didn’t realize she had been scooting backwards this whole time and now she is looking out at an upside down view of the quarry, the massive drop below dizzying. Groaning in horror as she forces herself to sit up, she manages to straighten, only to come face to face with Arlo’s half rotten face.

“Boo!” He says playfully and Caroline lets out a startled, choked cry, recoiling, and nearly backing herself over the cliff. A few thoughts shoot through her mind in a split second. She is gonna fall. The fall might kill her if she lands wrong, or misses the water entirely. And even if it does not, she will be severely injured, and the water *surely*

then will kill her. The next thought that crosses her mind is as equally horrifying. Whatever this creature is, *it knows.*

As if in reply to her frantic train of thought, Arlo's corpse smiles a wicked knowing grin as he leans closer. Caroline presses herself into the rock, clinging and scraping her boots through the scree for purchase. She wants to slip to the side perhaps, but to one side is the huge waterlogged branch, tangled in the drawstring of her dead brother's swim trunks, and the other side is just a small outcropped section of rock, a half step down or so from her level, covered in brush and only a few feet wide. She might be able to make it.

With a scream, Caroline makes a snap decision. She pulls her knees to her chest and kicks out into the gut of the corpse with everything she has. Her boots sink in to the wet flesh, entrails spill out all over her as he is sent backwards a short distance onto his rear. In the following moments, Caroline rolls over, clambers onto the step down, and pulls her feet underneath herself to stand.

The rock beneath her shifts and cracks, dropping a couple inches. She freezes, adrenaline screaming through her veins as her eyes go from the ground at her feet up slowly to look at her brother's corpse as it rights itself, sitting up to stare over at her with a terrifying smile. Her gut drops and she has no chance to react as the rock gives way beneath her and she is all at once plummeting. Her hands and body slam into the rock wall, clawing for purchase. Four of her fingers hook over the sharp edge and she hangs a moment. With a cry, she lifts her other hand up and grabs the edge and starts to pedal her feet against the rock wall, trying to pull herself up when the rock crumbles in her grip and she drops.

She is falling, and she has just enough time to let out a blood curdling scream before her backside hits the water. Hard.

Stars explode across her vision as all the air is slammed from her body. Agony seizes her body, paralyzing her diaphragm and ribs, keeping her from drawing a breath as she slips underwater.

After what feels like an eternity, but is truly barely fifteen seconds, Caroline manages to open her eyes. All she sees is murky blurry green. In the next second her lungs remind her that she needs air.

Now. Caroline looks around frantic, unsure what's up or down. For a few seconds, it all looks the same and she is descending into a blind panic. Everything is the same shade of murky jade.

There is a sensation of sliding around one of her ankles so suddenly she actually lets out a scream. What little air was left in her lungs escapes her mouth in a forced burst of bubbles as Caroline yanks her knees to her chest. It is then that she notices which way the bubbles are moving. She blinks, an unnecessary action underwater, but done involuntarily as she orients her body with the bubbles and follows them with desperation as her lungs truly scream for oxygen. She sweeps broad strokes through the water with her hands, desperate as her diaphragm spasms, trying to force air into her lungs. She moans, pressing her lips together and clenching her teeth against the screaming burning urge to breathe. Caroline kicks hard, with everything she has left towards the surface, but she feels so heavy, what with her clothes and boots dragging her down.

Suddenly, miraculously, she reaches the surface and feels cool air in her face. As soon as her head breaks the surface, she drags in a needy gasp of air. In her haste and panic, she gulps in a little water and sinks into a coughing fit as she struggles to tread water between gasping coughing breaths.

After only a minute or so, she has calmed enough to breathe more evenly, and has stopped coughing. Her back feels raw and her body aches from the shocking impact on the water. Shaking, she looks around and takes stock of herself and her surroundings, slowly looking up to where she fell from. A pit drops into her stomach when she sees just how far she fell. Still breathing heavy, Caroline turns around, searching for the way out of the deep quarry. Her heart sinks when she sees the ramp is on the opposite side of the emerald lake from where she is. She slumps with a defeated sigh before she starts to swim slowly towards it, her clothes and boots making it difficult to move any faster than a snail's pace. She won't let go of a single article of clothing though. They are her only perceived barrier between her skin and the horrors that lurk in the murky dark, real or otherwise.

She makes it to the halfway point after a few minutes and is getting anxious and exhausted. Her mind is racing. How was that even possible? Arlo is dead. It's impossible for her to have seen him, let

alone for him to have casually walked up and spoken to her. Not to mention if this was some sick prank, there no way for whomever was behind it to have known her mother's warnings to her and Arlo all those years ago. It's far too specific. She had to be hallucinating.

But then.... how did her boots meet with such *real resistance* ?

Caroline is yanked under the water faster than she can react and fills her lungs with water as she gasps in shock. Blind panic takes over as her lungs burn and spasm. She wants to cough, but all she gets is more water, struggling desperately as she is dragged further and further from the surface. She looks down to see a hand around her left ankle. A hand with a white glove and a ruffle around the wrist. Her eyes go wide.

Mind clouding, lungs burning and screaming for air, she desperately kicks at the hand with everything she has left. To her relief it releases her ankle and disappears in the inky darkness below her. Weakly, dazed, and losing consciousness, Caroline tries to swim for the surface. But before she can, a blurred shape surges up from the darkness and freezes right in front of her. Time stands still for Caroline as she stares at a smiling clown, stark white greasepaint is caked on his face, with red marks slithering up from his lips over his eyes.

Is this what its it's like to drown? Do you lose your mind? See things? Feel things that aren't real? She is terrified. She doesn't want to drown. Not like Arlo.

Teeth. Thousands of fang-like teeth emerge from his gums as his hand snaps out and wraps around her throat, tight as a vice. She could not have drawn a breath if she wanted to. Caroline flails and squirms and claws at the arm and hand of the clown as those burning yellow gold eyes glow and sear into her like twin suns. Malice and hunger glisten in those orbs as horror and desperation drives Caroline to the brink. He stares coldly at her as she panics, her vision narrowing to nothing as she loses consciousness and her struggle to escape slowly wanes to stillness.

The eldritch being has no need for air. Not really. Such a simple thing, breathing. So subtle, thoughtless. Yet, absolutely necessary for

these creatures to survive. It only takes minutes, sometimes less, before that vibrancy and lividity begins to slip. Those moments can be the most delicious... As these weak, delicate, *needy* little creatures have an incredible will to survive.

They certainly do *not want to die* .

For whatever reason.

It has not quite figured out what drives them so, but that fear, that *horror....* it tastes *so good*.

And Caroline... well, she is soaked in that delectable medley of fear, and It feels her consciousness slipping further and further into the dark as they rise above the water to appear instantaneously on the far shore.

Perhaps It can wring a few more delectable drops of that finely cultivated terror from this morsel. Sweeten the pot, as it were. Pennywise drops the limp body to the cold hard stone none-too-gently, and looms patiently over her, dry as a bone, as though he never set foot anywhere near the water, despite being fully submerged not moments ago. The clown draws a slow breath through It's nose, drooling at the scent coming off this human. The jarring force of the drop sent enough of a jolt through Caroline to force the water from her lungs and she sputters and gasps in a huge horrified breath as she sits bolt upright, eyes wide and darting as she tries to understand what's happening.

That's when she sees the clown and freezes. Adrenaline fills her veins in a burning rush and the clown lurches at her with a throaty snarl, drawing a terrified scream from her lungs as horrible claws and needle sharp teeth rush at her. She scoots backwards on her rear as those jaws snap shut just shy of her face. Her boots scatter scree and shards of sharp rock and she throws her arms up to protect her face as she falls onto her back. Huge hard hands wrap roughly around her forearms and drag her off the ground.

Caroline begs and pleads, legs flailing and kicking as she unclenches her eyes to see the face of her brother staring back at her. Normal, healthy, alive... not rotten and waterlogged. Her eyes dart between

his for a few precious seconds of disbelief before the illusion is ruined by the long fangs that just from his gums in place of normal human teeth. Her stomach flips. "NO! No no no no please, no!"

An otherworldly growl rattles his chest as that horrible mouth splits in a macabre smile, "Yes yes yes, dear, yes!" Pennywise turns so that Caroline is dangling over the water again, drawing another surge of fear from her. Greed wells in It, It wants more.

In a blink, they are at the top of the quarry again, twenty some odd feet above the water, Caroline's sodden boots and clothes dripping into the water far below. Her whole body clenches in fear as her stomach drops.

Frantic, she kicks and squirms and wiggles and begs as those burning yellow and blood red eyes bore into hers. The clown smirks, "Have a nice swim." He growls as he releases her forearms. She screams, clawing at the air as she plummets a second time into the water twenty six feet below.

Seconds after the shock subsides, Caroline manages to open her eyes, stunned and disoriented. Again, the pressing green darkness surrounds her. The clown is floating right in front of her, face neutral, eyes glowing. Letting out a gurgling scream, she recoils, eyes wide before she looks around, frantic for the surface. She glimpses the bubbles rising and moves towards them, but cannot make another movement as a hand grips a fistful of the clothes on her back. She freezes and slowly looks back over her shoulder.

A horrifying creature stares back at her all teeth and burning orange gold eyes. It's like she is staring into the eyes of some kind of fantasy sea monster. It's dark seaweed greenish body has fins rising down Its back, along Its arms and sides, and Its visage is alien and horrible. A massive, thick eel-like body writhes, dark, heavily muscled and powerful beneath a lithe humanoid torso, covered by fins and mottled scales. Like some unsettling video played backwards, that huge thick tail slithers through the dark green water, drawing them both deeper into the murky dark. Those horrible clawed hands grip her upper arms now in their webbed vices, dragging her writhing and squirming along with It.

She can't breathe, but her lungs are again screaming for air as she fights tooth and nail for her freedom. Her ears pop over and over as they descend deeper into the darkness. All she can hear is her own heart pounding in her ears over her muffled grunting and moaning.

Suddenly, a deep rumbling growl vibrates the water around her, sending a shock of paralysis through her as her eyes dart amongst the many glowing orbs of orange that float in those dead fish like alien eyes... there has to be at least eight of them all arranged symmetrically around its face like some sort of horrible spider. She registers rows of sharp teeth as the creature parts its lips.

Then, with a startling and sickening suddenness, a voice enters her mind in a clammy nauseating surge and she heaves as it whispers, "would you like to float?"

Caroline writhes, sickened by the invasion. Her body cannot take any more, she needs air. Right now. She twists and swats and kicks. She thinks a boot slips off her foot. Her jacket has sunk down around her elbows. She kicks hard, eyes locked on the faint pillars of shifting sunlight that have made it down this deep into the water. The creature releases her with a broad fang-filled grin and she surges toward the light, toward the surface, toward air.

Caroline has no idea how deep she is. But she kicks hard for the surface nonetheless. Her hands claw at the water. That grotesque creature circles up from the darkness below to cruise lazily around her. It watches her closely, eyes like burning coals, but It does not touch her, apparently content to watch her ascent from a few feet away. It's long dark form slips silently and effortlessly through the water, curving gracefully around the water that surrounds her as she makes her desperate play for the surface.

Her abdomen is in full on spasms, her diaphragm trying to force her to breathe as her vision narrows and darkens. Panicked sweeps of her arms and legs slow quickly to stillness as her body overtakes her will and she drags in a gasp of water.

A cold webbed hand slips around her throat. Over the next few seconds, her body thrashes, dragging in lungfuls of water as it exhausts itself in one last ditch effort to survive before oxygen leaves

her tissues and she loses consciousness. The last thing that fills her vision are those glowing orange eyes as the creature looms up and fills her view.

It drags her down away from the surface, she was mere feet from salvation, ironically, and this makes the creature smile in some dark recess of itself as it draws the body into It's gaping maw, sucking the life and soul out of the girl as the deliciously seasoned meat drenches It's palate.

End of Chapter Five